

Duxbury Clipper, Thursday, March 18, 1982

The Solomon Washburn House

1805



Solomon Washburn was a block-maker in one of the shipyards along the bay. He must have been a promising young man, for he married Hannah, daughter of Joshua Winsor, a man known for being particular about the men his several daughters married. He wanted those daughters well provided for.

Joshua Winsor was also patriarchal, wanting his many children to live under his eye, making it possible for at least 5 to build on parts of his many acres that ran along the shore. Hannah was one such child.

Solomon Washburn built on the west side of the newly laid out street that ran through the Winsor lands, the street now Washington St. This was in 1805, the year he and Hannah were married, and just north of the home of her sister Judith and Dr. Rufus Hathaway.

The original house was a large 2-story hip-roofed house with brick ends and end chimneys as well as a rear kitchen chimney. There are 6 fireplaces, 4 pro-

bably original. There are 2 front rooms with a straight stairway. One has finer finish details, a cornice and a wainscot, evidently the parlor, while the opposite room is similar in size but much simpler, a more common room.

The straight hall stair has a nice dark wood rail, but ordinary ballisters, quite a contrast to the 2 long facing boards that are beautifully scrolled.

The ell, large and 2 stories, is a later addition, considerably enlarging the house. Remodeling in recent years has been extensive in this ell, with interesting and amusing oddities, adapting to the modern living. However, the modern additions are all to the rear, leaving the house itself just as Solomon Washburn built it in 1805.

Solomon and Hannah had 8 children, all born in this house. They were in the midst of relatives and it is safe to estimate that there were Winsors in 3 out of 4 houses from Winsor's Wharf to Fort Hill. And all this time Joshua Winsor's children were living in their own homes, all houses they had built, all on the original Winsor homestead.

Joshua Winsor, when aged 61, seems to have decided it was time to get at some family matters he had put off. His lands extended along the shore from his wharf to Fort Hill, and probably to the Bluefish River. Although many of his children had built on this land, some many years earlier, none had title to the lot he built on.

One day in February 1815, Joshua Winsor sat down to rectify the situation, and wrote several deeds, all similar in wording, and all with approximate valuations. One deed was to his daughter, Hannah, wife of Solomon Washburn, "for natural love and affection and other good reasons, the dwelling house now occupied by Solomon Washburn" and about a half acre on which it stood. The house and land he valued at \$2,000, which suggests he may have originally financed the house.

The lot was only 8 rods square, until 1827, when Solomon bought a 12-ft. strip along his south bound from the Winsor heirs. On this same lot, Solomon Washburn's house still stands, now the home of Marcia and Robert Holmes Jr.

-- Dorothy Wentworth, researcher